

Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation awards Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative \$40,000



Tremaine Foundation



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The Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation (EHTF) has once again awarded the Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative (KRC) a grant to support the nonprofit's mission to convene and support local partners in developing a high-quality early childhood system that is family-centered.

In 2018 the EHTF supported KRC's efforts to gather data and create a resource for parents to ensure their children are ready to enter kindergarten in the Fellsmere community. In light of the tremendous success of the Family Connection Center in Fellsmere, the EHTF has awarded a grant of \$40,000, so the KRC can expand their work to the Gifford Family Connection Center.

"Kindergarten readiness has been clearly identified by educators and community members as a vital step to growing successful learners and readers," shared Alexis Bivens, EHTF program director. "Our belief at The Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation is that young learners benefit from a community integration of practices."

Neuroscience research shows the first 1,000 days of a child's life are critical, setting the stage for a person's intellectual development and lifelong health. Through data collected in Fellsmere, KRC has observed that by empowering and encouraging parents through the development of a family engagement model, children can thrive.

In environments where families struggle with extreme poverty, children are subjected to widespread disparities, including higher rates of obesity, lower educational attainment, and less earnings.

According to the United Way's ALICE report, 67% of families in Gifford are living in poverty or struggling to support their basic needs. To combat this disparity, KRC seeks to arm every parent, regardless of income or zip code, with the knowledge and tools they need to raise healthy, productive children.

"Because of places like the Family Connection Center, folks are provided with real answers, in real-time for what is needed to ensure the best experiences for children that live there. We applaud KRC for extending beyond their own programming to form partnerships with practitioners who are integrating practices like social, emotional learning, early identification of struggling readers, and the readiness of the

classroom teachers to instruct that reader,” noted Bivens.

“Our first year of family engagement work in Fellsmere was extremely successful,” shared Dr. Nivea Torres, KRC Executive Director. “We conducted 14 parent training sessions that reached 80 children (ages birth to five) and served 45 unique families. We served 599 hot meals and distributed 213 books for home libraries.”

KRC proudly partnered with over 19 local agencies to build the confidence of parents and children through interactive fun activities that prepared them for kindergarten, explained Torres. “This year, we launch our parent training sessions in Gifford at Dodgertown Elementary, and we are anticipating the same level of success.”

To ensure the health and well-being of future generations, and the economic prosperity of Indian River County, we as a community must invest in early learning opportunities and the family support structures that create quality early learning environments for our children, particularly those who are living below the poverty line, noted Dr. Torres.

By better equipping Gifford families with the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to help prepare their children for kindergarten, KRC along with generous donors like the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, will make a difference in our future world view.

For more information about the Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative, visit www.krcirc.org or call 772-617-4350.

About KRC

The Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative is a local nonprofit working with over 50 partner agencies to help prepare children and their families for school and life. We proudly partner with the Moonshot Moment, transforming the next generation in Indian River County by having 90 percent of all students reading on grade level by the third-grade.